Subject: 1789 Fort Harmar Treaty
Indian Peace medal

Sargent, William P.
[Providence, RI]

1923

WILLIAM P. SARGENT
189 BOWEN ST.
PROVIDENCE, R. I. May 12, 1923.

The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway & 156th Street,
New York.

Gentlemen:-

In Vol 1 of Bulletin 30, entitled "Hand Book of American Indians", by the Bureau of American Ethnology; at the top of page 834 in the second column, it describes a medal given by the United States Government to the Indians at the Fort Harmer Treaty in Ohio in 1789.

I want to ask you if you have one of these medals. If not do you know of any that are in existence? I have one on an indian necklace and want to know if it is the only one on record.

Thanking you in advance for your reply, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Wm P. Sargent.

May 14th, 1923.

William P. Sargent, Esq.,
189 Bowen Street,
Providence, R. I.

Dear Mr. Sargent:

I have read your letter with much pleasure, and I am wondering if you collect Indian peace medals. We have here undoubtedly the finest collection of these that there are.

The pewter medal described in Bulletin 30 of the Bureau of American Ethnology is not correct. This medal was made out in the Indian Territory in the 70's by a trader, and copies of it are turning up every now and then. If you will examine the lettering you will note that it is not the style of 1789.

We have in our collection a large oval silver medal, similar to the one illustrated on page 834 but with Columbia and the Indian instead of Washington and the Indian. This medal is dated 1789, and possibly was one of those given out at the Fort Harmar Treaty. It is the only one known today.

Whenever you are in New York I trust you will visit our Museum, and I will take pleasure in showing you our collection of Indian medals.

Very truly yours,

Curator,

WILLIAM P. SARGENT
189 BOWEN ST.
PROVIDENCE, R. I. May 31, 1923.

The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway & 156th Street,
New York:-

Attention of Mr Howland Wood, Curator.

Gentlemen:-

Am in receipt of your kind letter of the 14th inst in reply to mine of the 12th, and note that the medal described in Bulletin #30 is not correct. That the medal I have was made out in Indian Territory in the 70's by some trader. Well, my dream has been shattered, my bubble pricked; but never-the-less I am glad to hear the truth although it is not always welcome. I thought I had something very fine and rare. I wrote to the Smithsonian Institute and they did not have any, nor did they know of any in existence. They refered me to you however. I wrote the Field Museum in Chicago, as they have a very fine collection of Indian Curios, but they did not have one nor did they know of any in existence. I then wrote to your next door neighbor Mr Sylvestor, Curator of the Museum of American Indian. Have not heard from him yet although I know he received my letter. He told a mutual friend that he was going to write to me soon.

I am not collecting medals but have a small but select collection of old Indian goods and relics and am adding to it from time to time as I can pick up something nice and old. The medal that I thought was the Fort Harmer medal came to me on a necklace of large Grizzly Bear Claws with Hudson Bay Beads. It belonged to an old Indian Chief who stated that it had been in his family for a long, long time and handed down from one generation to another. That it had been restrung several times, but always the same way.

His story may still be partly true as these medals were given out about fifty years ago, when he was a small boy and did not know that it was added at that time. The next time I am in New York I hope to have the pleasure of letting you show me the large oval Fort Harmar silver medal that you have.

I have an Oak Tree sixpence that my Grandmothers gardener dug up on the old homestead over thirty years ago. I understand they are quite rare. This one is in good condition. Will you please tell me about what it is worth? Awaiting your reply and again thanking you for your letter that spoiled my pipe dream, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Wm P. Sargent